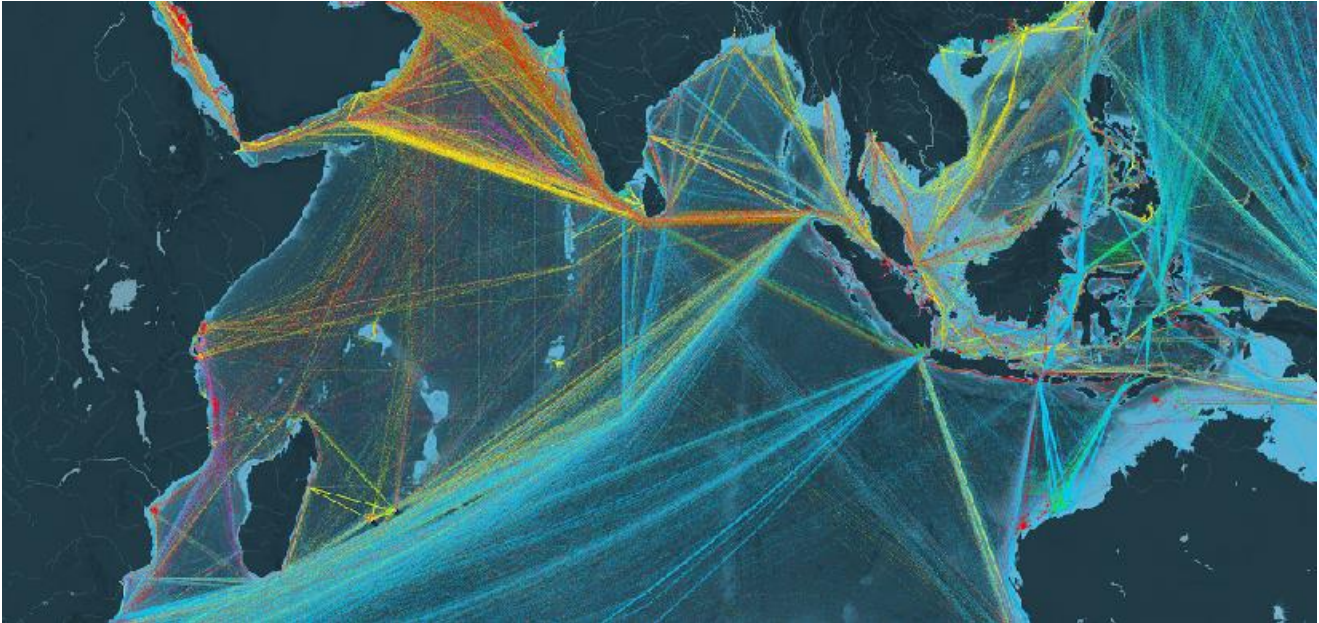# Connecting the Indian Ocean region to South and Southeast Asia

Map © shipmap.org by Kiln.digital, with data from UCL and ExactEarth

The European Union (EU) has been addressing threats to its **sea lines of communication** ever since it established the Critical Maritime Routes (CMR) programme in 2009, in particular in support of the Djibouti Code of Conduct. CRIMARIO I (2015 - 2019) was one of the CMR initiatives covering the Western Indian Ocean region, established to enhance Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) through information sharing, capacity building and training. This was achieved through the implementation of the IORIS platform, an information sharing and incident management tool, and an extensive training programme on Maritime Data Processing (MDP) for analysis and visualisation of data.

CRIMARIO II is goal oriented and opportunity driven

CRIMARIO II builds on the experience of CRIMARIO I by expanding the geographical scope of the project towards South and Southeast Asia with a view to contributing to safer sea lines of communication with the EU, through cross-sectoral, inter-agency and cross-regional cooperation. While enhancement of maritime information exchange remains one of the main pillars of CRIMARIO, the scope of the new phase is enlarged to include other aspects/objectives, such as law enforcement and legal instruments. More specifically, its three interlinked objectives[1] are as follows:

Objective 1: enhancing information exchange and analysis, and crisis/incident management;

Objective 2: strengthening inter-agency cooperation in maritime surveillance, policing, investigation and judicial matters; and

Objective 3: facilitating the implementation of international legal instruments and regional arrangements.

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[1] *Objective 1 will be implemented in both Western Indian Ocean and Asian countries. Objectives 2 & 3 will be implemented exclusively in South Asian and Southeast Asian countries.*
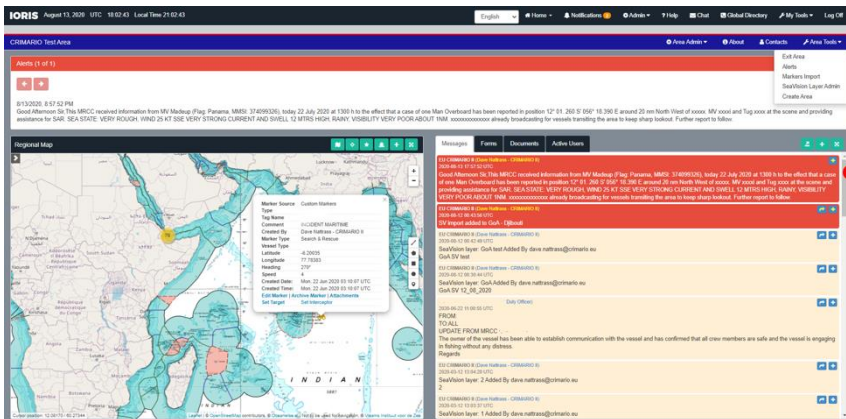
Timeline of CRIMARIO II

CRIMARIO II is a four-year EU funded project, with a budget of EUR 7.5 million (May 2020-April 2024), and implemented by Expertise France.

Inception phase: Launched on 29 May 2020, the Inception Phase of the project is expected to last until 31 January 2021, but this may be extended given the COVID 19 pandemic. During this period, the team will conduct desk-top research and remote work with other EU bodies and potential partners (countries and regional organisations) with a view to identifying actions to be conducted in synergy with existing initiatives whilst continuing to support IORIS platform for the regional partners. At the end of this phase, a 4-year action plan will be proposed to the European Commission for approval, with a focus on sustainability.

Execution stage: The team will implement the 4-year plan (information sharing, capacity building, training and exercises, and legislation update) once partner organisations and countries express a willingness to partner with CRIMARIO II.

IORIS – Maritime Coordination and Information Sharing Platform

IORIS is one of the many tools CRIMARIO has to offer to support enhancing maritime security coordination and information exchange in the region. It is a secure tailor-made web-based

platform for:

- **information sharing** in a secure and flexible environment;
- **coordination of maritime operations** including real-time management of incidents at sea;
- **secure communications between users** (national agencies, regional centres), allowing each to control access rights for their respective designated areas.

IORIS' key functions integrate instant messaging (permanent narrative), Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), advanced mapping, data import options, SeaVision interoperability, instant area creation with full tools for dedicated incidents/operations, sharing of files (with additional encryption if required), and private chat (single & group) to name a few. It incorporates the latest technologies for ensuring a high level of security including two-factor access authentication and end-to-end encryption, with each centre having full autonomy and privacy over their information.

The IORIS platform is currently being used by national and regional maritime agencies in the Western Indian Ocean, Horn of Africa and Red Sea, including Comoros, Djibouti, France (Réunion), Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (RMIFC, Madagascar) and Regional Centre for Operational Coordination (RCOC, Seychelles). Additional requests are frequently received from other countries and organisations and are being processed by the CRIMARIO team in coordination with RCOC/RMIFC on a regular basis.

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